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HOUSE RULES



House committee says Trump privilege claim should be tossed

The House panel investigating the Jan. 6 U.S. Capitol insurrection meets at the Capitol in Washington, Dec. 1, 2021. From left are Rep. Adam Schiff, D-Calif., Rep. Zoe Lofgren, D-Calif., Chairman Bennie Thompson, D-Miss., Vice Chair Liz Cheney, R-Wyo., Rep. Adam Kinzinger, R-Ill., and Rep. Jamie Raskin, D-Md.

Associated Press
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LIVE ENTERTAINMENT 7 DAYS A WEEK

SUNDAY: TICO KOCK STEEL DRUM 4 - 6pm	MONDAY: ANGELA FLORES VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm	TUESDAY: JEAN PAUL SAXOPHONIST 6:30 - 8:30pm	WEDNESDAY: PAULA RIDERSTAP SINGER 6:30 - 8:30pm	THURSDAY: RICKY THOMAS GUITAR 7 - 9pm	FRIDAY: RICKY THOMAS GUITAR 7 - 9pm	SATURDAY: ANGELA FLORES VIOLINIST 6:30 - 8:30pm
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House committee says Trump privilege claim should be tossed

From Front

WASHINGTON (AP) — The House committee investigating the Jan. 6 insurrection at the Capitol said Thursday that the Supreme Court should let stand an

appeals court ruling that the National Archives turn over documents from former President Donald Trump that might shed light on the events leading up to and including that day. In a filing with the court,

lawyers for the committee argued that it is within its jurisdiction to seek the information.

"Although the facts are unprecedented, this case is not a difficult one," the lawyers said in the filing, adding, "This Court's review is unwarranted, and the petition for a writ of certiorari should be denied."

The lawyers said, however, that if the court "nonetheless believes" a review is warranted, "the Congressional Respondents respectfully request that the case be resolved expeditiously."

The nine-member congressional committee is investigating not just Trump's conduct on Jan. 6 — when he told a rally crowd to "fight like hell" shortly before rioters overran law enforcement officers — but also his efforts in the months before to challenge election results or obstruct a peaceful transfer of power.

Trump has attacked the committee's work and continued to promote unfounded conspiracy theories about widespread fraud in the election, even though Joe Biden's victory was certified by all 50 states. His claims have been rebuked by courts across the country.

In suing to block the Na-

tional Archives from turning over documents, Trump's lawyers have said the committee has "no legitimate legislative purpose" for seeking them and granting access to the records would damage executive privilege for future presidents. Last week Trump's lawyers asked the Supreme Court to hear arguments on his claim that executive privilege prevents the release of the documents, describing the committee as engaged in "meandering fishing expeditions." The committee says the documents, including presidential diaries, visitor logs, speech drafts and handwritten notes, are vital to its investigation into the deadly riot at the Capitol aimed at overturning the results of the 2020 presidential election.

The Supreme Court could decline to hear the appeal. Such action would mean the ruling Dec. 9 by the federal appeals court is the final word on the matter.

The U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia Circuit tossed aside Trump's various arguments asserting executive privilege, saying Congress has a "uniquely vital interest" in studying the events of Jan. 6. That panel also placed

emphasis on Biden's determination that the documents were in the public interest and that executive privilege should therefore not be invoked.

The question now is whether at least four justices agree to hear the case. The court has six conservative jurists, including three appointed by Trump, and several issues have arisen since Trump's lawyers filed their original petition that might be of interest.

On Tuesday, The Associated Press reported that the House committee had agreed to defer its attempt to get some documents, at the request of the Biden administration. The White House was concerned that releasing all of the Trump administration documents sought by the committee could compromise national security and executive privilege.

The agreement to keep some Trump records away from the committee is memorialized in a Dec. 16 letter from the White House counsel's office. It mostly shields records that do not involve the events of Jan. 6 but were covered by the committee's sweeping request for documents from the Trump White House about the events of that day. □



The Supreme Court is seen at dusk in Washington on Oct. 22, 2021.

Associated Press



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To our clients and to our readers,

We sincerely thank you for your support and your friendship throughout 2021. There will be no newspaper on New Year's Day 2022, but we will return to your doors, lobbies, and newsstands on Monday, January 3rd, 2022. We wish you a joyous holiday season and a Happy New Year. Stay safe!

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New York jury holds drugmaker Teva liable in opioid crisis

By JENNIFER PELTZ

Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — Drugmaker Teva Pharmaceuticals contributed to the opioid crisis, a suburban New York jury ruled Thursday in one of few verdicts so far among thousands of lawsuits nationwide over the painkillers.

A separate trial will follow to determine what Teva will have to pay in the case, in which New York state and two Long Island counties took on a swath of drug companies.

In Thursday's verdict, a Suffolk County jury found the drug company played a role in what is legally termed a public nuisance but had lethal consequences — an opioid use epidemic linked to more than 500,000 deaths in the U.S. in the past two decades.

"Teva Pharmaceuticals USA and others misled the American people about the true dangers of opioids," James, a Democrat, said in a news release. "Today, we took a significant step in righting the wrongs this country has collectively experienced over the last two decades."

Israel-based Teva, which makes medications using the powerful opioid fentanyl, said it "strongly disagrees" with the verdict and plans to appeal.

"The plaintiffs presented no evidence of medically unnecessary prescriptions, suspicious or diverted orders, no evidence of over-supply" by Teva and didn't



Trucks drive in front of Teva Pharmaceutical Logistic Center in the town of Shoam, Israel, Oct. 16, 2013.

show that Teva's marketing caused harm to New Yorkers, the company said in a statement. It is also arguing for a mistrial, based on various issues.

Around the country, state and local governments, Native American tribes, unions, school districts and others have sued the drug industry over the painkillers. New York's lawsuit, filed in 2019, targeted several opioid producers and distributors, companies that buy medications in bulk and sell them to pharmacies.

The suit accused drug companies of breaching their legal duties "to profiteer from the plague they knew would be unleashed." The state and counties said that drug manufacturers collaborated to mislead people and downplay the

serious risks of opioid addiction, and that drug distributors skirted systems meant to limit orders for painkillers. Teva is known for making generic drugs, but the lawsuit focused on Actiq and Fentora, two brand-name fentanyl drugs approved for some cancer patients. Teva repeatedly promoted them more broadly for other types of pain, in a "deceptive and dangerous marketing strategy," the lawsuit said.

"They try to say they're selling legal products. The only problem is: They're selling them illegally," lawyer Hunter Shkolnik, who represented Nassau County, said at a virtual news conference Thursday. "The jury saw that what they're doing is wrong."

Teva said Thursday it "con-

tinues to focus on increasing access to essential medicines to patients" and believes a national settlement of opioid issues is in patients' best interest.

New York said the conduct of the various opioid companies named in the suit cost the state hundreds of millions of dollars in addiction treatment bills and other expenses. Lawyers for the counties suggested the Teva could be held liable for tens of billions of dollars, or more, in damages.

"The numbers are staggering, what it has cost our communities and what it will continue to cost our communities" in emergency services for overdose victims, drug rehabilitation programs and more, Suffolk County's lawyer, Jayne Conroy, said at the virtual

news conference.

Teva was the sole manufacturing defendant left in the suit after others settled, most recently Allergan Finance LLC in December. The various settlements have netted New York up to \$1.5 billion.

Elsewhere, only a few opioid cases have gone to verdicts to date, with no clear consensus on outcomes.

An Oklahoma judge ruled against drugmaker Johnson & Johnson in 2019, but the state's supreme court overturned that decision in November.

A California judge in November ruled in favor of drugmakers — including Teva — and a federal jury in Cleveland sided with two Ohio county governments that had claims against pharmacy chains.

A trial has been completed but a judge has not yet ruled in a West Virginia case, and a trial is ongoing in Washington state. Thousands of other cases are in the process of heading to trial.

There have also been settlements. Some of the biggest industry names — such as distributors Amerisource-Bergen, Cardinal Health and McKesson and drugmakers Johnson & Johnson, Mallinckrodt Pharmaceuticals — have reached nationwide settlements with a cumulative value potentially well over \$30 billion. Most of the money is being directed to fight the epidemic. □

Associated Press

Census Bureau: World grew by 74 million over past year

The world's population is projected to be 7.8 billion people on New Year's Day 2022, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

That represents an increase of 74 million people, or a 0.9% growth rate from New Year's Day 2021. Starting in the new year, 4.3 births and two deaths are expected worldwide every second, the Census Bureau estimated.

Meanwhile, the U.S. grew by almost 707,000 people over the past year, and the nation's population is expected to be 332.4 million residents on New Year's Day 2022, according to the U.S. Census Bureau.

The Census Bureau estimate represents a 0.2% growth rate from New Year's Day 2021 to New Year's Day 2022.

Starting in the new year, the U.S. is expected to grow by one person every 40 seconds from births, minus deaths, as well as net international migration. The U.S. is expected to experience a birth every nine seconds and a death every 11 seconds, as well as an additional person from international migration every 130 seconds. □



Indians, some wearing face masks as a precaution against the COVID-19, crowd a weekly market in New Delhi, India, Wednesday, Dec. 29, 2021.

Associated Press

Times Square show will go on despite virus surge, mayor says

By **KAREN MATTHEWS** and **MICHELLE L. PRICE**
Associated Press

NEW YORK (AP) — New York City will ring in 2022 in Times Square as planned despite record numbers of COVID-19 infections in the city, the state and around the nation, Mayor Bill de Blasio said Thursday.

"We want to show that we're moving forward, and we want to show the world that New York City is fighting our way through this," de Blasio, whose last day in office is Friday, said on NBC's "Today" show.

After banning revelers from Times Square a year ago due to the pandemic, city officials previously announced plans for a scaled-back New Year's bash with smaller crowds and vaccinations required.

While cities such as Atlanta have canceled New Year's Eve celebrations, de Blasio said New York City's high COVID-19 vaccination rate makes it feasible to welcome masked, socially distanced crowds to watch the ball drop in Times Square. "We've got to send a message to the world. New York City is open," he said. Thanks to the highly contagious omicron variant that was first identified as a variant of concern last month, new COVID-19 cases in the U.S. have soared to their highest levels on record at over 265,000 per day on average. New York City re-



Jonathan Bennett, host of Good Riddance Day, left, and Joe Papa, Director of Events, Times Square Alliance burn a 2021 banner at the official Good Riddance Day celebration in Times Square, Tuesday, Dec. 28, 2021, in New York.

ported a record number of new, confirmed cases — almost 44,000 — on Wednesday, according to New York state figures.

Statewide, New York on Wednesday reported more than 74,000 people tested positive for COVID-19, the second day in a row that the state set a record of new, confirmed cases. More than 1,600 people were newly hospitalized statewide, pushing the number of COVID-19 hospitals around the state to more than 7,300. New York also reported 76 additional deaths. De Blasio said the answer is to "double down on vaccinations" and not-

ed that 91% of New York City adults have received at least one COVID-19 vaccine dose. The city's next mayor, Eric Adams, will take the oath of office in Times Square early Saturday. Adams, a Democrat like de Blasio, said at a news conference Thursday that his team is working with de Blasio's and he plans to keep much of the outgoing mayor's plans in place.

Among the policies Adams plans to keep in place is a vaccine mandate for private sector employees that is the most sweeping of any state or major city. Adams said he, like de Blasio, would impose fines on busi-

nesses that do not comply but would try to use the fines as a last resort.

Even as reported cases and hospitalizations surge, Adams has committed to keeping schools open and staving off the closures that marked the early months of the pandemic.

"We can't shut down our city again," Adams said. "We can't allow the city to go further into economic despair." The new mayor said he and a team of advisors are studying whether to expand on other vaccine mandates. New York City currently requires teachers and staff in public and private schools to

Associated Press

be vaccinated but de Blasio did impose the requirement on students. Dr. Dave Chokshi, the city's Commissioner of the Department of Health and Mental Hygiene, said Thursday that city officials will decide by spring whether to impose such a requirement for students. Officials are also studying whether to require that people have received a booster shot in order to be in compliance with vaccine mandates for indoor dining, working out at gyms and other activities.

Adams said he plans to roll out a color-coded system alerting New Yorkers to the current threat level posed by the virus and what safety measures are in place. The incoming mayor did not offer more details about the system. The new mayor and his medical advisors said Thursday that they plan to distribute face masks that provide more protection against the coronavirus, such as N95s, at health department sites and through community groups. The city also plans to send students home with rapid tests for use at home. "We should plan and prepare for a challenging few weeks, certainly through January with respect to what we're seeing for the winter surge due to omicron," Chokshi said. "This is not something that we're just going to take passively. This is something that we have agency over." □

2 Colorado cities evacuated by wind-driven wildfire



Smoke from a wildfire rises in the background, Thursday, Dec. 30, 2021, in Superior, Colo.

Associated Press

LOUISVILLE, Colo. (AP) — Residents of two northern

Colorado cities were ordered to evacuate Thursday because of wildfire.

The city of Louisville, was has a population of 21,000, was evacuated after residents in Superior, which has 13,000 residents, were told to leave.

Superior is about 20 miles (32 kilometers) northwest of Denver. Louisville is just 4 miles (6 kilometers) north-east of Superior.

A nearby portion of U.S. Highway 36 was also shut down because of fire.

The blaze northwest of Superior was one of sev-

eral fires that started in the area Thursday, at least some sparked by downed powerlines, as winds have gusted up to 105 mph (169 kph), according to the National Weather Service.

A scene straight out of an apocalyptic movie was captured in bystander video outside a Costco in Superior. It shows winds whipping through the barren trees in the parking lot surrounded by gray skies, a hazy sun and small fires scattered across the ground.

Colorado's Front Range,

where most of the state's population lives, had an extremely dry and mild fall, and winter so far has continued to be mostly dry.

Extreme conditions like these are often from a combination of unusual random, short-term and natural weather patterns heightened by long-term, human-caused climate change. Scientists have long warned that the weather will get wilder as the world warms. Climate change has made the West much warmer and drier in the past 30 years. □

Iran launches rocket into space amid Vienna nuclear talks

By **NASSER KARIMI** and
ISABEL DEBRE

Associated Press

TEHRAN, Iran (AP) — Iran launched a rocket with a satellite carrier bearing three devices into space, authorities announced Thursday, without saying whether any of the objects had entered Earth's orbit. It was not clear when the launch happened or what devices the carrier brought with it. Iran aired footage of the blastoff against the backdrop of negotiations in Vienna to restore Tehran's tattered nuclear deal with world powers. An eight round had been underway this week and is to resume after New Year's holidays. Previous launches have drawn rebukes from the United States. The U.S. State Department, Space Force and the Pentagon did not immediately respond to requests for comment on Thursday's announcement from Iran. Ahmad Hosseini, a Defense Ministry spokesman, identified the rocket as a Simorgh, or "Phoenix," rocket that sent up the three devices 470 kilometers (290 miles).

"The performance of the space center and the performance of the satellite carrier was done properly," Hosseini was quoted as saying. But hours later,



This photo released by the official website of the Iranian Defense Ministry on Thursday, Dec. 30, 2021, shows the launching of Simorgh, or "Phoenix," rocket in an undisclosed location in Iran.

Associated Press

Hosseini and other officials remained silent on the status of the objects, suggesting the rocket had fallen short of placing its payload into the correct orbit. Hosseini offered a speed for the satellite carrier that state-associated journalists reporting on the event indicated wouldn't be enough to reach orbit.

Iran's civilian space program has suffered a series of setbacks in recent years, including fatal fires and a launchpad rocket explosion that drew the attention

of former President Donald Trump. Iranian state media recently offered a list of upcoming planned satellite launches for the Islamic Republic's civilian space program. Iran's paramilitary Revolutionary Guard runs its own parallel program that successfully put a satellite into orbit last year. Hosseini described the launch announced Thursday as "initial," indicating more are on the way.

Television aired footage of the white rocket emblazoned with the words,

"Simorgh satellite carrier" and the slogan "We can" shooting into the morning sky from Iran's Imam Khomeini Spaceport. A state TV reporter at a nearby desert site hailed the launch as "another achievement by Iranian scientists."

The blast-offs have raised concerns in Washington about whether the technology used to launch satellites could advance Iran's ballistic missile development. The United States says that such satellite launches defy a United

Nations Security Council resolution calling on Iran to steer clear of any activity related to ballistic missiles capable of delivering nuclear weapons.

Iran, which long has said it does not seek nuclear weapons, maintains its satellite launches and rocket tests do not have a military component.

Announcing a rocket launch as diplomats struggle to restore Tehran's atomic accord keeps with Tehran's hard-line posture under President Ebrahim Raisi, a recently elected conservative cleric.

New Iranian demands in the nuclear talks have exasperated Western nations and heightened regional tensions as Tehran presses ahead with atomic advancements. Diplomats have repeatedly raised the alarm that time is running out to restore the accord, which collapsed three years ago when Trump unilaterally withdrew the U.S. from the deal.

From Vienna, Iranian nuclear negotiator Ali Bagheri Kani told Iranian state TV that he hopes diplomats pursue "more serious work to lift sanctions" when nuclear talks resume next week. He described negotiations over the past week as "positive." □

Chinese officials promise groceries for lockdown residents

By **HUIZHONG WU**
Associated Press

TAIPEI, Taiwan (AP) — Chinese officials promised steady deliveries of groceries to residents of Xi'an, an ancient capital with 13 million people that is under the strictest lockdown of a major Chinese city since Wuhan was shut early last year at the start of the pandemic.

China's Commerce Ministry has contacted nearby provinces to help ensure adequate supplies of everyday necessities, a ministry spokesperson said Thursday.

State broadcaster CCTV aired a story Thursday showing building staff as-

sembling free grocery deliveries for the residents of an apartment complex in Xi'an.

The deliveries included a box of 15 eggs, a 2.5-kilogram (5.5-pound) bag of rice and some green vegetables. Residents could also expect either some chicken or pork, it said.

Still, some people complained in comments below the segment shared on Weibo, a social media platform, that they have not received the same deliveries in their communities.

Many worried if they will be able to obtain fresh vegetables and meat.

This week, authorities tight-

ened restrictions in Xi'an so that people can no longer leave their homes to buy groceries.

Previously, residents were allowed to buy food once every two days. The city is also sealed off, meaning that people cannot leave without special permission. Xi'an reported 155 new locally transmitted cases on Wednesday, and a total of about 1,000 cases in the latest outbreak.

The numbers pale in comparison to outbreaks elsewhere in the world, but are significant for China, which continues to follow a policy of trying to eradicate the coronavirus.

That has resulted in wide-



In this photo released by Xinhua News Agency, subdistrict office staff carry daily necessities to be delivered to households under closed-off management in Xi'an, in northwestern China's Shaanxi Province, Dec. 29, 2021.

Associated Press

spread lockdowns to cut the virus's spread.

China has reported a total

of 101,890 cases and 4,636 deaths since the pandemic began. □

Boat with 120 Rohingya refugees disembarks in Indonesia port

By RAHMAT MIRZA

Associated Press

LHOKSEUMAWE, Indonesia (AP) —

A group of 120 Rohingya Muslims disembarked from a boat that had drifted for days off Indonesia's northernmost province of Aceh and was towed by a navy ship into port, officials said Friday.

The refugees' wooden boat was reportedly leaking and had a damaged engine. Efforts to rescue its passengers, who are overwhelmingly women and children, began after Indonesia's government on Wednesday said it would allow them to dock because conditions on the boat were so severe.

The broken-down boat was towed by a navy ship early Thursday from its location about 53 miles (85 kilometers) off the coast of Bireuen, a district in Aceh, toward Krueg Geukueh seaport in neighboring Lhokseumawe, a coastal town in the North Aceh district, said navy western fleet command spokesman Col. La Ode M. Holib.

High waves and bad weather hampered the rescue operation, and the navy ship was moving 5



Rohingya refugees sit in a wooden boat as it arrives at Krueg Geukueh Port in North Aceh, Indonesia, Thursday, Dec. 30, 2021.

knots (5.7 miles) per hour to keep the towed boat from capsizing, Holib said. The boat docked safely just after midnight Friday.

Authorities used buses to move the Rohingya refugees from the port to a nearby warehouse, providing temporary shelter amid heavy monsoon rains. The refugees will all be tested for the coronavirus, Holib added. The boat was first

sighted by local fishermen on Sunday about 60 miles (96 kilometers) off the coast of Bireuen, said Badruddin Yunus, the leader of the local tribal fishing community. He said fishermen provided food, water and clothes to the passengers, including 60 women, 51 children and nine men, who said they wanted to go to Malaysia and had been at sea for 28 days before the boat's en-

gine broke down. Videos obtained by The Associated Press from the Indonesian navy showed the refugees' wooden boat packed with dozens of members of the Rohingya ethnic community floating at sea. Women and children onboard cried out for help as the navy ship approached their boat, and officers in an inflatable boat were delivering food

and other supplies to them. The United Nations refugee agency said it was ready to assist Indonesia's government and local community in preparing for the Rohingya, including establishing a quarantine process in line with international public health protocols amid the pandemic.

More than 700,000 Rohingya Muslims have fled from Buddhist-majority Myanmar to refugee camps in Bangladesh since August 2017, when the Myanmar military launched a clearance operation in response to attacks by a rebel group. Myanmar security forces have been accused of mass rapes, killings and the burning of thousands of homes.

Groups of Rohingya have attempted to leave the crowded camps in Bangladesh and travel by sea in hazardous voyages to other Muslim-majority countries in the region.

Muslim-dominated Malaysia has been a common destination for the boats, and traffickers have promised the refugees a better life there. But many Rohingya refugees who land in Malaysia face detention. □

Associated Press

Israel approves 4th vaccine dose for most vulnerable



A shipment of Pfizer's antiviral COVID-19 pill, Paxlovid, sits on a pallet on arrival at Ben Gurion International airport near Tel Aviv, Thursday, Dec. 30, 2021.

By AUDREY HOROWITZ

Associated Press

TEL AVIV (AP) — Israel has approved a fourth vaccine dose for people most vulnerable to COVID-19, an official said Thursday, becoming one of the first countries to do so as it

braces for a wave of infections fueled by the omicron variant.

Nachman Ash, the director general of the Health Ministry, announced the decision at a press conference, saying the doses would initially be given to those

with weakened immune systems.

"We will continue to track the data on a daily basis and we will see if we need to broaden this recommendation to more of the population," he said.

The Sheba Medical Center later said it would begin administering the fourth dose to heart transplant patients early on Friday. Israel launched trials of the fourth dose at the center earlier this week, administering it to some 150 medical personnel who had gotten a booster in August.

Israel was among the first countries to roll out Pfizer's coronavirus vaccine a year ago and began rolling out boosters last summer. But it still saw a wave of infections blamed on the delta variant, and officials have warned of another driven

by the fast-spreading omicron.

Around two-thirds of Israel's population of nearly 9.5 million have received at least one dose of the vaccine, and some 4.2 million Israelis have received all three doses, according to the latest Health Ministry figures.

"Israel will lead the way in administering a fourth vaccine (dose) to the Israeli people," Prime Minister Naftali Bennett said in a statement. "Israel's strategy for overcoming omicron is clear: The greater the wave, the greater the protection we will need to overcome it."

Earlier Thursday, Israel received its first shipment of pills that treat the worst effects of the virus.

It's among of the first countries to receive Pfizer's Paxlovid, a pill that can be

taken at home to ward off the most severe symptoms of the coronavirus. All the previously authorized drugs require an IV or injection.

Israeli media reported that the first shipment consists of 20,000 doses, with more expected as Pfizer ramps up production.

Israel currently has more than 22,000 active patients, including more than 90 who are seriously ill. At least 8,243 people have died from COVID-19 in Israel since the start of the pandemic.

Last week, Chile announced that it would start offering a fourth dose in February. Chile has reported almost 86% of its population fully vaccinated, making it the country with the highest level of immunization against the coronavirus in Latin America. □

Group: Sudanese forces fire at anti-coup rally; 4 killed

By NOHA ELHENNAWY

Associated Press

CAIRO (AP) — Sudanese security forces fired tear gas and live ammunition at protesters rallying Thursday in the country's capital and elsewhere against the October military coup. At least four protesters were killed, a Sudanese medical group said. The Sudan Doctors Committee tweeted that the fatalities took place in Khartoum's twin city of Omdurman and that many demonstrators were wounded. The protests were the latest in near-daily demonstrations across Sudan — despite tightened security measures and closures of bridges and roads — over the Oct. 25 military takeover that upended the country's fragile transition to democracy.

During the day, thousands marched in Khartoum, beating drums and waving Sudanese flags. They chanted "Revolution! The military belong in the barracks!" Demonstrators also hurled stones at security forces and armored police vehicles from where



People chant slogans during a protest to denounce the October military coup, in Khartoum, Sudan, Thursday, Dec. 30, 2021.

tear gas was fired. Similar protests took place in other parts of the country, including the provinces of Kassala and West Darfur, and the coastal city of Port Sudan. The medical group called on doctors to rush to hospitals in Omdurman to attend to the casualties, saying many were "in criti-

cal condition." The committee is part of the Sudanese Professionals Association, which spearheaded the mass uprising that led to the ouster of longtime autocrat Omar al-Bashir in 2019. The association said that state-allied militias were intercepting ambulances and medics to pre-

vent them from reaching the wounded. Thursday's protests were preceded by a disruption of the mobile internet, according to advocacy group NetBlocs, a usual tactic employed by the generals since the coup. "Our position is clear; we are opposed to any negotiations, partnership or

compromise" with the military, said Shahinaz Gamal, a protester. "We came out today to bring down this (ruling military) council and to have a civilian democratic government afterwards."

Despite the internet disruption, activists posted a few videos showing masked protesters under clouds of gas. Also, Saudi-owned Al Arabiya television and its Al Hadath news channel reported that Sudanese security forces raided their bureaus in Khartoum and confiscated their equipment during the protests on Thursday. They also said that two of their correspondents along with their camera crew were beaten up by Sudanese forces.

The U.S. Embassy in Khartoum condemned the killing of four people and injury of dozens during Thursday's demonstrations. "We also deplore the violent attacks by Sudan's security services on media outlets and journalists, and urge authorities to protect the freedom of the press," the embassy tweeted. □

Associated Press

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SCAN ME







ORANJESTAD - The Department of Public Health DVG wishes everyone a safe and responsible New Year's celebration.

They urge the community to limit their alcohol consumption during the festive days and be responsible when driving. They

Be extra careful with fireworks

also urge the community NOT to handle fireworks when under the influence of alcohol.

The holiday season brings joy to many people, but keep the following in mind:

- Do not allow unsupervised children to handle fireworks;
- use ear protection, especially for children under the age of 14;
- do not put fireworks in your pockets or backpack;
- keep enough distance from fireworks when lit, at least 8 meters;

- do not light fireworks in your hands; always light fireworks with the lighter fuse;
- do not throw fireworks on others or near animals;
- do not re-light malfunctioning fireworks;
- do not experiment with fireworks;
- when done, soak the area before cleaning up.

By following these recommendations, everyone can enjoy the end of the year safely and happily.

The DVG wishes Aruba a responsible end-of-year celebration and wishes everyone a healthy and prosperous 2022. ☐

Fireworks and pets. What you need to know!

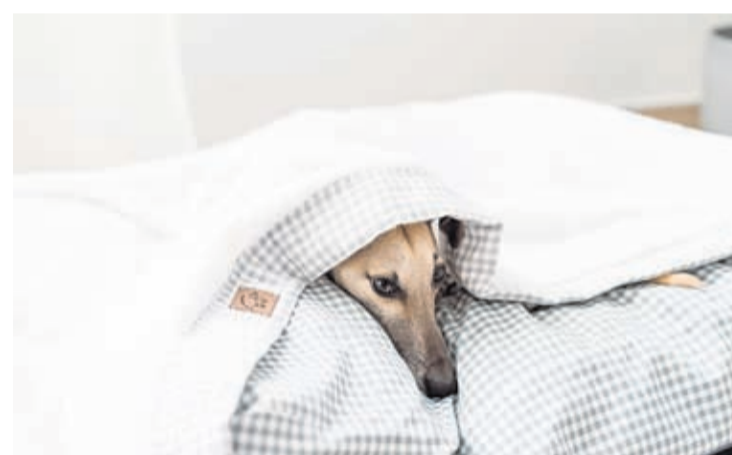
ORANJESTAD - As we are approaching the end of 2021, we would like to remind the community that pets do not enjoy fireworks as humans do.

Loud unexpected firework sounds can scare even the most relaxed dog or cat. Why? Dogs hear sounds four times louder,

whereas cats can hear sounds almost ten times louder than humans.

Some pets find shelter at home during the New Year's celebration, while many get desperate and flee their homes and the sounds.

Some dogs like fireworks and try to grab the lit fireworks with their mouths. These



can cause burns that will require emergency vet intervention.

That is pet owners must be extra vigilant with their pets around the fireworks.

How to keep your pets safe around fireworks:

- Keep your pets indoors at a safe location during the use of fireworks.
- turn on a radio or TV to distract the pets;
- stay close to them and keep them busy;
- provide extra attention that they deserve.

The pet's fear can cause them to find a way out of the yard while trying to find shelter from the loud sounds. There are some ways to find the pets back in the event they run away;

Make sure your pet has a tag on its collar with your information. It is advisable to have the pet microchipped at the vet.

A microchip will give your pet an identification number that can be useful when tracking if they runoff. When found, a vet can scan the microchip and locate the owner. Ask your vet if tranquilizers are optional for your pets. Tranquilizers need to be administered only if necessary and in the correct doses.

If the pet is not microchipped, take a recent photo of the pet to use if it is lost. Make sure the information of the Microchipped pet is accurate and up to date, including current address and phone number. ☐

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Visit the COVID Test Center HOH only on your appointment date and time

ORANJESTAD -The Test Center of the Dr. Horacio E. Oduber Hospital (HOH) is seeing an increase of individuals visiting too early on their scheduled day and even a day before the appointment date.

This situation is causing long lines and hinders testing of those on time for their test-

ing appointment. These persons received their appointment via the Aruba Health App. The DVG urges everyone scheduled for their COVID test at the HOH Test Center, to be patient and only go test on the testing date and time as indicated on the Aruba Health App. Those who are too early for their

appointment will not be tested and should come back later for their test. For those with symptoms but with NO appointment:

- Call your Family Physician. In acute cases, call your doctor's emergency number);
- register for your test on <http://covid19test.healthapp.aw> or call



2800101; date appointed and wait at home for the test results. □

Happy New Year from Aruba to



ORANJESTAD — We love that despite the crisis you decided to spend New Year with us, and we are therefore very thankful. We would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your new year celebration picture while enjoying our Happy Island.

Complete the sentence: Happy New Year from Aruba to

Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive?

Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page!

Thank you for supporting our free newspaper throughout the year. For 2022 we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

Happy new Year!!! □

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Covid Test Center at Paseo has the best experience!

PALM BEACH - Don't spend a single moment of your long awaited holiday in Aruba thinking about your return testing. The Covid Test Center Aruba located at the Paseo Herencia Mall is your travel ally. Just sit back and relax knowing that, when the time comes, their professional staff will make this process a breeze for you. No need to make an appointment or dread the nasal swab; you'll be done with it in a matter of minutes and back to fun stuff.

Some regions require proof or certification of negative COVID-19 status before allowing people into or out of the country. With rules and guidelines varying greatly from country to country, the safest approach is to have recent proof you are COVID-19 negative before you get to the airport. Covid Test Center @ Paseo provides both PCR and Antigen type testing with results within hours; and both are accepted by the CDC.

Covid Test Center @ Paseo is conveniently located at the Paseo Herencia Mall in the heart of the Palm Beach Strip and right across from the Playa Linda and Holiday

Inn hotels; only two doors from T.G.I. Friday's. We are open seven days a week, between 9 am and 9 pm. This gives you the choice to walk in when it better suits you. It can be at the start or at the end of your day. No appointment needed here. The friendly technicians at Covid Test Center @ Paseo will take your information as we are aware it is imperative that this shows accurately on the results. For a seamless process, please verify that you have provided the correct email to deliver the certificate. Said certificate can be printed at our offices should you wish to do so. We understand that nobody enjoys doing a nasal swab. That is why we take pride in our reputation of being the gentlest swabbers on the island. First, we will not rush you just to go to the next in line. Through clear given instructions we want you to feel comfortable. When you are ready, we will promptly but tenderly take a proper sample. Many elsewhere traumatized people praise the difference it makes to test with us.

Forget about counting hours before your flight, our turnaround is fast! For travel to the US, for example, a day before will suffice. A great game plan is to test first, then head out for an evening of dining, shopping and entertainment at the Paseo Herencia Mall, home of the water and lights show in the evenings. By the time you are back at the hotel, your results will be ready in your inbox.

A PCR test costs \$75 and results are ready the next day, while Antigen test costs \$35 with same day results. If you are staying at an off-high-rise area property, you can benefit from the free parking our customers receive at the mall lot.). For more information follow us on Facebook, Instagram or Twitter. ☐



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EXPLAINER: Why are so many flights being canceled?

By TALI ARBEL and
PAUL WISEMAN
Associated Press

The forces that have scrambled thousands of flights since Christmas Eve could ease in January, but that's cold comfort to the millions of flyers with New Year's plans.

And if 2021 has taught us anything, it's that 2022 will likely be just as unpredictable.

Here's a look at what has mucked up flights for thousands of people this holiday season, and what could happen over the next few weeks.

WHAT HAPPENED?

Airlines weren't spared from the spread of the omicron variant, which knocked out flight crews at airlines that had already reduced the size of their workforces following the collapse of air travel in 2020.

The wave of omicron infections arrived at the same time that crowds began to pack airports for holiday travel. Then the Pacific Northwest and other areas were slammed with cold and heavy snowstorms.

The convergence of all three forced airlines to cancel thousands of flights starting on Christmas Eve. As of Thursday afternoon, about 7,800 flights departing from, going to, or within the U.S. have been scratched, according to flight-tracking firm FlightAware. More than 1,100 of those were on Thursday.

The U.S. was not alone. There have been thousands of cancellations abroad. European and Australian airlines report the same logistical issues dealing with COVID-19 and flight crews. Chinese airlines have made up a large percentage of cancellations. To put that in perspective, most flights were OK. There are nearly 70,000 flights a day, globally, said aviation data provider Cirium.

WHEN MIGHT THINGS IMPROVE?

U.S. health officials this week halved guidance to five days of quarantine for asymptomatic Americans who catch the coronavirus. Airline industry experts say



Jessica Andrijauskas, from Buenos Aires, rests her head on her luggage as she awaits the results of her COVID-19 test, at Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport, Wednesday, Dec. 29, 2021, in Arlington, Va.

Associated Press

that will alleviate the staffing issues that have forced airlines to scratch flights — but the flight attendants unions say they're wary of the change and its effect on worker health. Yet cases of omicron, the fast-spreading variant of the COVID-19 virus, continue to rise. And that isn't the only problem.

It could take up to a week for airlines to fully recover from lingering bad weather, said Jim Hetzel, an expert on airline operations at Cirium.

Getting past the holiday rush will also help. January and February are the year's slowest travel months after the New Year's rush, said Willis Orlando, senior flight expert at Scott's Cheap Flights. "There should be a lot more room for airline to cut routes, reassign pilots and have staff in reserve." Some airlines have also recognized that the confluence of the holiday rush, omicron and bad weather make it impossible to continue with current schedules.

JetBlue said Wednesday that it was reducing its schedule through mid-January in hopes of giving customers more time to make alternate plans rather than suffer last-minute cancellations — although still more cancellations remain likely.

"We sincerely apologize for the inconvenience that these schedule changes bring," said spokesperson Derek Dombrowski. He said crew members are volun-

teering to work extra hours and managers are pitching in where they're trained to do so.

Alaska Airlines urged flyers who could to reschedule for after Jan. 2, as it was reducing Seattle departures and more cancellations and delays were expected this week. Delta and United spokespeople said they could not predict when operations would normalize.

WAS THIS SPATE OF CANCELLATIONS UNUSUAL?

Inclement weather is a sporadic but constant threat to travel in winter. A 2021 rebound in travel, when airlines didn't have enough staff to keep up with demand, led to heavy cancellations and delays earlier this year.

Southwest Airlines struggled in summer and fall because of delays and cancellations, which it blamed on computer problems, staffing shortages and bad weather. American canceled over 1,000 flights over Halloween weekend because of staffing shortages. Delta canceled dozens of flights around Easter this year because of staffing problems.

COULD THE AIRLINES HAVE DONE ANYTHING TO PREVENT THIS?

Omicron was a shock to the system and its speed broadsided just about everyone, airlines included.

"This is kind of an extreme circumstance," said Hetzel, the operations expert at Cirium.

Some airlines were hit harder than others simply be-

cause of where they tend to operate. Southwest and American had lower geographic exposure to the areas of the U.S. where weather was awful, and less of its staff is based in areas where COVID-19 cases are surging, said Raymond James analyst Savanthy Syth.

Labor groups, however, say more could have been done, like offering extra pay to flight attendants during the holiday earlier on. The Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, which represents 50,000 workers at 17 airlines including United, Alaska, Frontier and Spirit, said Delta started offering on Christmas Eve but should have done it sooner. The union that represents American's flight attendants said it probably helped that the airline recalled staffers who were on leave. In a November memo, the chief operating officer at American noted that nearly 1,800 flight attendants returned from leave in November, and 800 would return in December, along with 600 new hires.

Syth, of Raymond James, did an analysis of which airlines she thought were more at risk of operational problems during the holiday season, which drives most of the fourth quarter's profitability for airlines. She found that airlines that were conservative with scheduling were hit as well as those that were aggressive.

"This leads me to believe that this has more to do with the uniqueness of omicron-variant and the greater impact it is having in the Northeast currently than a failure on the part of airlines to prepare," Syth said.

The airlines were more prepared for the holidays than they were for hail and thunderstorms that snarled travel earlier this year, said Charles Leocha, president and founder of the consumer advocacy group Travelers United.

"It's a far cry from the episodes we were facing in the summer and autumn when we had airlines that were

out of whack for two or three days," Leocha said. "It's been a really good effort. The airlines have paid more money to keep people on reserve and they're paying more money to keep people flying."

Airlines have been hiring. The U.S. Department of Transportation says that as of October, U.S. passenger airlines employed more than 400,000 full-time workers, but that's about 9% fewer than they employed two years ago.

Even critics say airlines this year were at the mercy of the pandemic.

"Airlines should have planned better and the (Transportation Department) should have monitored airline capacity and required ready reserves of equipment and personnel given the large federal subsidies since 2020," said Paul Hudson, president of the advocacy group FlyersRights.org. "But the omicron variant high infection rate is primarily to blame in the holiday season disruptions."

WHAT SHOULD TRAVELERS DO IF AIRLINES CANCEL THEIR FLIGHTS?

If your flight is cancelled, most airlines will put you on the next available plane to your destination free of charge. "They will figure a way to get you there. You don't have to pay anything extra," Leocha said.

If you cancel your trip instead of taking an alternative flight, you are entitled to your money back, even if you had nonrefundable tickets. When they cancel flights, airlines tend to push customers toward vouchers for future flights instead of offering a full refund. Orlando, of Scott's Cheap Flights, urged travelers to remember their right to get their money back. "Airlines make it very easy to allow them to keep your money," he said.

You also can ask the airline to transfer your ticket to another airline, but it is not obligated to do so. Likewise, airlines are not required to reimburse you for hotel rooms, cabs or other expenses. □

CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

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Yesterday's answer

ACROSS 38 Site of

1 Fancy action
neckwear

6 Concentrate maker

11 Get a sounds
goal

12 "You can't goal
make me!"

13 Dance of goal
Brazil

14 Musical 45 Passover
speeds meal

15 Bulldog 45 Passover
backer meal

16 CBS 45 Passover
series with meal

18 Suffering 45 Passover
Antoinin meal

19 Badge 45 Passover
metal meal

20 Solo in 45 Passover
space meal

21 Bolt's 45 Passover
partner meal

22 Drooped 45 Passover
debts

24 Meringue 45 Passover
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25 Least 45 Passover
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27 Tear 45 Passover
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29 Like a 45 Passover
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33 Busy 45 Passover
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34 Put 45 Passover
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35 Stationery 45 Passover
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36 Team 45 Passover
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Abbr.

37 Holds

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critical

9 Remove 27 Mexican
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10 High- 28 Fairy
stepping king

17 Blues 30 Posture
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23 Setting 31 Fragrance
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24 Sixth 33 Stockpile
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AXYDLBAXR
is LONGFELLOW

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

12-31

CRYPTOQUOTE

YLYUB MEQY BKZ MYJU J
GYJA KAA J NJGYXWJU BKZ
RUYDYXM J XYH RGJNY AKU
XYH EWYJD JXW RUKCUYDD.

— NTJUGYD FYMMYUEXC

Yesterday's Cryptoquote: EDUCATION IS THE ABILITY TO LISTEN TO ALMOST ANYTHING WITHOUT LOSING YOUR TEMPER OR YOUR SELF-CONFIDENCE. — ROBERT FROST

U.S. affirms new interpretation for high-level nuclear waste



In this May 11, 2015, file photo, nuclear waste is stored in underground containers at the Idaho National Laboratory near Idaho Falls, Idaho.

Associated Press

By KEITH RIDLER

BOISE, Idaho (AP) — The Biden administration has affirmed a Trump administration interpretation of high-level radioactive waste that is based on the waste's radioactivity rather than how it was produced. The U.S. Department of Energy announcement last week means some radioactive waste from nuclear weapons production stored in Idaho, Washington and South Carolina could be reclassified and moved for permanent storage elsewhere.

"After extensive policy and legal assessment, DOE affirmed that the interpretation is consistent with the law, guided by the best available science and data, and that the views of members of the public and the scientific community were considered in its adoption," the agency said in a statement to The Associated Press on Wednesday.

The Biden administration's affirmation of the new interpretation came after various groups offered letters of support and opposition to the agency after Biden became president, lead-

ing to the notice in the Federal Register making clear where the administration stood. Biden has reversed Trump policy in other areas. The policy has to do with nuclear waste generated from the reprocessing of spent nuclear fuel to build nuclear bombs. Such waste previously has been characterized as high level. The new interpretation applies to waste that includes such things as sludge, slurry, liquid, debris and contaminated equipment.

The agency said making disposal decisions based on radioactivity characteristics rather than how it became radioactive could allow the Energy Department to focus on other high-priority cleanup projects, reduce how long radioactive waste is stored at Energy Department facilities, and increase safety for workers, communities and the environment.

The department noted that the approach is supported by the Blue Ribbon Commission on America's Nuclear Future, formed during the Obama administration. The department identified three sites where waste is being stored that will be

affected by the new interpretation. In Idaho, it's stored at an 890-square-mile (2,300-square-kilometer) Energy Department site in the southeastern part of the state that includes the Idaho National Laboratory. In Washington, the waste is stored at the Hanford Nuclear Reservation, a decommissioned nuclear site in the south-central part of the state that produced plutonium for nuclear bombs. In South Carolina, it's stored at the 310-square-mile (800-square-kilometer) Savannah River Site, home of the Savannah River National Laboratory.

The department, in the statement to the AP, said it "is committed to utilizing science-driven solutions to continue to achieve success in tackling the environmental legacy of decades of nuclear weapons production and government-sponsored nuclear energy research."

The agency also last week made public a draft environmental assessment based on the new interpretation to move some contaminated equipment from the Savannah River Site to a commercial low-level radioactive waste disposal facility located outside South Carolina. Potential storage sites are located in Andrews County, Texas, and in Clive, Utah.

Previously, the agency through a public process and using the new interpretation, approved moving up to 10000 gallons (37,854 liters) of wastewater from the Savannah River Site, with some going to Texas. A similar public process would be used concerning additional waste at the Savannah River Site or in the other two states.

The nation has no permanent storage for high-level radioactive waste. Reclassifying some of the high-level waste under the new interpretation means it can legally be sent to commercial facilities for storing waste deemed less radioactive. □

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CDC warns against cruises, regardless of vaccination status



Cruise ships float at Port Miami, on April 7, 2020, in Miami.

Associated Press

By **ADRIANA GOMEZ LICON**
Associated Press

MIAMI (AP) — The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention warned people on Thursday not to go on cruises, regardless of their vaccination status, because of onboard outbreaks fueled by the omicron variant.

The CDC said it has more than 90 cruise ships under investigation or observation as a result of COVID-19 cases. The agency did not disclose the number of infections.

"The virus that causes COVID-19 spreads easily between people in close quarters on board ships, and the chance of getting COVID-19 on cruise ships is very high," even if people are fully vaccinated and have received a booster, the CDC said.

In March 2020, as the coronavirus took hold in the U.S.,

the CDC put a halt to all cruises for what turned out to be 15 months. Last June, it allowed ships to resume sailing under new strict new conditions.

In August, as the delta variant surged, the agency warned people who are at risk of severe illness despite being vaccinated not to go on cruises.

The CDC on Thursday also recommended that passengers get tested and quarantine for five days after docking, regardless of their vaccination status and even if they have no symptoms.

The omicron variant has sent case levels soaring across the U.S., including Florida, the hub of the nation's cruise industry. The state set another record this week for new daily cases, with more than 58,000 recorded Wednesday.

U.S. cruise lines have not

announced any plans to halt trips, though vessels have been denied entry at some foreign ports.

Before the CDC announcement, Royal Caribbean Group said in a statement that omicron is leading to passenger cancellations and changes to itineraries, but that the mutant version is causing "significantly less severe symptoms than earlier variants."

The company said that since cruising restarted in U.S. waters last spring, 1.1 million guests had traveled with its cruise lines and 1,745 people had tested positive for COVID-19, or about 0.16% of the passengers.

It said that 41 required hospitalization, and that no passengers hit with the omicron variant had been taken to hospitals.

"We don't like to see even one case, but our experience is a fraction of the comparable statistics of virtually any other comparable location or industry.

Few businesses are subject to such intense scrutiny, regulation and disclosure requirements by so many authorities," said Richard Fain, CEO of Royal Caribbean.

Most cruise lines require adult passengers to show proof of vaccination against COVID-19. Ships are allowed to relax measures such as mask use if at least 95% of passengers and 95% of crew are fully vaccinated. □



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Mandy Moore braces for farewell to 'This Is Us'; music ahead

By LYNN ELBER
AP Television Writer

LOS ANGELES (AP) — If Mandy Moore is bracing for emotional whiplash, it's understandable. She and her musician-husband, Taylor Goldsmith, welcomed their first child in February, an event she says that turned her world "Technicolor," and the pair collaborated on an upcoming second album. The cloud ahead: The end of "This Is Us," the NBC drama that she says proved a "dream on every single level," from her co-stars to the consistently challenging work. The 18-episode final season, beginning Tuesday on NBC, will include an episode directed by Moore. "It's going to be so horrific to say goodbye in a couple of months" when taping wraps, said Moore. "I haven't really wrapped my brain around it yet." She plays matriarch Rebecca Pearson in the decade-shifting family drama created and produced by Dan Fogelman — who she says has steadfastly resisted pleas to keep it going.

Moore won't have much of a lull after taping concludes. Next summer, the singer-songwriter and Goldsmith plan to tour in support of their follow-up album to 2020's "Silver Landings," with son August in tow. Moore calls him "the best thing in my life" and a look-a-like for his Dawes band frontman dad, including the dimple they share ("little butt chin," as Moore cheerfully labels it on the baby, nicknamed Gus). In an interview with The Associated Press, Moore talked about motherhood and what she sees ahead for her career, which already counts teen pop stardom, movies ("A Walk to Remember," "Saved!") and a lead actress Emmy nomination for "This Is Us." Remarks have been edited for clarity and length.

AP: As a new parent, how would you describe your life now?
Moore: It's all of the clichés, life in Technicolor. It's a boundless love that you never could have imagined. It's exhausting and exhilarating and everything

in between. On a professional level, I approach my job with an entirely new heart. I want to go back to the beginning of this show now, because I have some idea of what it's like to be a mother and what a mother's love is and what it makes you do, and the crazy choices that you never could have imagined yourself making before becoming a parent.

AP: Your comment about wanting to revisit "This Is Us" with your new perspective brings to mind how protective Rebecca was when her son Randall's birth father tried to enter his life.
Moore: That's exactly what I was thinking about. That was a choice that I really was at odds with Rebecca about early on. It was really challenging to see how she possibly could have made that decision. And now being a mom, that was her baby. The idea that anybody could potentially harm your child emotionally or could potentially physically remove your child, all of that is unfathomable. So I definitely have a lot more

compassion and empathy for the choice that she made.

AP: Dan Fogelman's thrown challenges at you every season, building to Rebecca's dementia. Can you recall your reaction when you learned what she'd face?
Moore: It was initially shocking, but also heartbreaking. This poor woman, at every juncture of her life, has had challenge after challenge. It really just says so much about who she is and what she brings to the table that with each challenge, she meets it with grace. I was also terrified, as I was when Dan initially told me, "Hey, we have this idea where you're playing this character present day as we will be jumping around in time." I think I had that same initial, "Whoa, can I do that?" when thinking about (playing) this woman with this very real diagnosis that millions of people across the country and the world deal with with loved ones. I wanted to make sure that I was doing my due diligence and approach-

ing this chapter of her life thoughtfully, because I know what a platform the show has to really have an important dialogue around Alzheimer's and dementia and diagnosis.

AP: Early in your acting career, you played several unlikeable, snooty characters, and expressed concern at one point about being typecast. Now you're playing a beloved mom, so it looks like you weren't.
Moore: I was not typecast. In fact, I'd love to get back to playing the villain a little bit more, especially after six years of playing arguably television's best mom. I think for a while I kept coming up against being typecast in these sort of lovely romantic comedies and whatnot. And that is definitely a certain side of who I am. But it took Dan, and it takes for any of us, I guess, as actors or creatives, just one person to see something in you and to give you an opportunity that opens an entirely new world. And that is what Dan Fogelman did for me with Rebecca.

AP: What's ahead for you on the music front?
Moore: This past July, we went back into the studio, the same group of musicians (on 'Silver Landings'). And the plan is to pick up in June and July of 2022 and go on the road the way that we had intended a week before the world shut down because of COVID. I feel like we'll have this fully realized tour of music from 'Silver Landings' and music from my next record. That'll be out probably right around the same time as we tour next year, and we'll be able to bring Gus with us. So we'll have a bus with mom and dad and Gus and play music every night. It's the dream. It's going to be a fun year in 2022. □



Mandy Moore arrives at the premiere of "This Is Us" Season Six on Dec. 14, 2021, in Los Angeles. When NBC's "This Is Us" begins its final season, fans won't be alone in dreading the show's end.

Associated Press





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For NCAA, year of upheaval leads to need for transformation

By RALPH D. RUSSO
AP College Football Writer

From court losses to political pressure to questions about how — and if — athletes should be compensated, the NCAA and college sports have faced all sorts of potential existential threats for more than 100 years. The difference in 2021 was volume. It was as if a century's worth of issues fell on college sports all at once. Lawmakers took aim at the NCAA, undercutting its ability to govern. The Supreme Court issued a scathing rebuke of the so-called collegiate model. Internally, a new era of athlete empowerment was clumsily ushered in with all sorts of unintended consequences. Another wave of conference realignment swept through college sports, causing disruptions and distrust among its leaders. "I think it is unquestionably an unprecedented potential crisis the NCAA is facing today," said Gabe

Feldman, the director of Tulane University's sports law program. If 2021 was about upheaval in college sports, 2022 will be largely defined by reform. College sports leaders will attempt to redefine the NCAA. The goal is to shift power away from the national governing body to conferences and schools, while still maintaining the association; To be more accommodating to the wide-ranging goals and needs of a wildly diverse membership, while still remaining tethered through competition.

"I see value in the national association," Southeastern Conference Commissioner Greg Sankey said. "I see value in the big tent. But we're challenged in new ways." Sankey has been appointed co-chairperson of the NCAA's Division I Transformation Committee, along with Ohio University athletic director Julie Cromer.

That group will begin its work

in earnest after the NCAA convention in late January, when a new pared-down constitution is expected to be ratified by membership. That will open the door for each of the NCAA's three divisions to create a unique governance structure.

For Divisions II and III that will mean little change. In Division I, which is comprised of 350 schools that compete in the NCAA's biggest championship events — such as the March Madness basketball tournaments — the transformation could be radical.

"What does that mean about the structure and governance? What does it mean about enforcement? What does it mean about how we think about eligibility? What does it mean about NIL? You could go on and on and on down the list," said Baylor President Linda Livingstone, a former college basketball player who has become deeply involved in the NCAA.



Julie Cromer Peoples, interim athletic director for the University of Arkansas, talks about the decision to fire Arkansas coach Bret Bielema following a Razorbacks NCAA college football game against Missouri, Friday, Nov. 24, 2017, in Fayetteville, Ark.

Associated Press

NIL is shorthand for name, image and likeness. After decades of prohibiting athletes from earning money from their fame, the NCAA loosened those restrictions close to the point of total deregulation this past summer. For the vast majority of athletes, the endorsement deals have produced

modest financial gains with little attention paid. According to data compiled by Opendorse, a company that works with schools on various NIL issues, the average NIL compensation for Division I athletes between July 1 and Nov. 30 was approximately \$250 per month. □

Madden's real gift? 'Always knew right thing to say'

By **JIM LITKE**
AP Sports Columnist

Somehow, he made every game feel fresh.

So it barely mattered whether you first ran across John Madden as the growling, grizzly bear-sized coach of the Oakland Raiders, the big, booming soundtrack of the NFL, or the guy with the "what-me-worry?" smile peeking out from the slot on a video-game console. All three generations of football fans faithfully followed in his wake because every run-in with Madden after that was bound to yield something new.

An insect landing on the camera lens in the middle of a game? Instead of ignoring that detail, Madden turned it into 10 seconds of broadcasting gold by ruminating on a bug's life. The pigeon that wouldn't leave the field after wrecking a pass play in a New York-Washington tilt? Madden did 10 seconds of play-by-play on that, too, wondering why the little guy hadn't settled on a seat with a real bird's eye view of the action.

He rified about dogs, turkey legs and once he got his hands on a telestrator, did animated bits about Gatorade buckets being part of a family and Troy Aikman's inability to grow a beard. Madden never lost his delight in illuminating the thousand little dramas that took place at the



Former Oakland Raiders coach John Madden practices the electronic charting device Telestrator on Jan. 21, 1982, in Pontiac, Mich., for the upcoming NFL football Super Bowl broadcast on CBS.

Associated Press

edges of the TV camera's roving eye.

He even waited some 30 years to reveal what surprised him most about the crowning achievement of his time on the sidelines — the Raiders' 1976 Super Bowl championship.

"I was told it took five or six guys to lift me up," Madden began the tale, "then they dropped me. ... But it was the happiest moment of my life."

Madden laid down the template for what would become one of the most influential careers the game has ever seen early in his tenure as a coach. Owner Al Davis had just handed

over the reins of one of NFL's surliest franchises to the then-32-year-old assistant in 1969, and there were a half-dozen or more successful role models from which to choose — among them, Vince Lombardi, Tom Landry, Don Shula and George Allen, all of them with hard-earned reputations as disciplinarians.

Even then, Madden decided to go his own way.

"The fewer rules a coach has," he announced with flawless logic, "the fewer rules there are to break."

The late Ken Stabler, the wild-eyed quarterback and leader of the Raiders' pack, remembered exact-

ly two when he was interviewed in 2006. "Be on time and play hard. There were no dress codes, no haircut rules. Because he treated us that way, nobody abused it."

The tributes pouring in since Madden's death Tuesday at age 85 focused on the "everyman" facet of his personality. Of course, not every man spends most of his adult life working within earshot of a microphone. And what came out of Madden's mouth at big moments in the biggest games sounded at times like spontaneous combustion — Boom! Whap! Boink! Oof! Bam!

But Madden made it a point to resonate with fans beyond the emotional level. He was a teacher throughout his life, trying to make an often overly complicated game understandable. His foray into video games was a fortuitous bit of timing, to be sure, but it was also an extension of Madden's ability to help others see the game through his eyes. When EA Sports began discussions about the first version of "Madden," the real Madden got involved up to his elbows.

He insisted on life-like graphics, full 11-man sides and even shared his old playbook from his days as the Raiders coach. The crazy add-ons, from sound effects to players shrugging off injuries to complete heroic plays, were often his ideas, too, part of a commitment to make the game fun and accessible.

Ultimately, what most folks will remember about Madden largely reflects where in their own lives they first found him. Patriots coach Bill Belichick, as unsentimental a soul and cold-blooded professional as football has ever produced, was asked what he would recall. After offering condolences to the Madden family, he began, "John is just a tremendous person to be around. I think we all, probably, try to have a good professional career. John had about five." □



Troy Vincent, executive vice president of football operations at the NFL, speaks to reporters during NFL meetings in New York, Oct. 26, 2021.

Associated Press

By **ROB MAADDI**
AP Pro Football Writer

NFL executive Troy Vincent hopes hiring minority candidates becomes so common that the Rooney Rule

is unnecessary.

"We should be creating a workplace culture that doesn't require mandates to interview people of color and minorities," Vincent

NFL exec Troy Vincent hopes Rooney Rule becomes unnecessary

told The Associated Press on Thursday. "They should be doing the right thing for the right reasons, not because there's a policy."

The NFL entered another hiring cycle this week when teams looking for a head coach were allowed to start interviewing candidates on Tuesday.

The Rooney Rule requires teams to interview at least two external minority candidates for general manager/executive of football operations positions, head coach and all coordina-

tor roles. Since the Rooney Rule was implemented in 2003, 27 of 127 head coaching jobs have gone to minorities. This year, only one Black head coach was hired for seven openings, but 13 Black coordinators and three general managers got jobs.

"Except for the head coaching positions, overall there was significant and historic progress for minority hiring in 2021," Vincent said. "Statistically, 47% of interview requests for coaches, coordinators

and GMs were for minority candidates, and 35% of open hires went to minorities, nearly doubling 2020 in both interviews and hires."

Vincent, a five-time Pro Bowl cornerback who played from 1992-2006 and a former president of the NFL players union, is the league's executive vice president of football operations. He wants to see minority hiring become a standard practice in the league and for all businesses and companies. □